

Fauquier County FY 2016 Adopted Budget

Budget-in Brief

Budget Overview

As part of the FY 2015 budget process, the Board of Supervisors directed County Administration and staff to formulate a two-year, or biennial, budget to include both fiscal years 2015 and 2016. While the Board of Supervisors approved a draft FY 2016 fiscal plan with the FY 2015 adopted budget, the Board of Supervisors must legally adopt a final FY 2016 budget and tax rates for Tax Year 2015 through the annual statutorily mandated process for adopting budgets and tax rates. As the second year of a two-year budget process, the FY 2016 adopted budget includes only a limited set of adjustments as a result of changes in revenue projections, state or federal mandates, or other significant events constituting an emergency that required additional budgetary consideration.

While the continued growth in general fund revenues and the overall condition of the County's economy is positive, the level of fixed and mandated cost increases has outpaced the level of revenue growth. This is coupled with the requirement for expanded services necessitating real estate tax increases to fund services, a trend experienced throughout the region and the nation. As anticipated in the draft FY 2016 fiscal plan, the FY 2016 adopted budget includes an increase to the Tax Year 2015 overall real estate tax rate of \$0.007 to \$0.999 per \$100 of assessed value. The average homeowner's real estate tax bill will increase approximately \$22 per year based on an average residential assessment of \$321,300. The adopted budget maintains all other tax rates at their current level.

Unemployment in Fauquier County has remained relatively steady over the past two years, dropping from 4.1% in April 2014 to 4.0% in April 2015. The County's unemployment rate is significantly lower than that of the nation and state, while similar to the rest of the region. Residential foreclosure rates have returned to a pre-recession level with a high of 339 filings in 2008 to 95 in 2014. For the first five months of 2015, residential foreclosures have decreased from an average of 7.9 per month in 2014 to an average of 7.0 per month for 2015 to date.

Expenditures

The FY 2016 adopted budget totals \$297.1 million with General Fund expenditures totaling \$171.3 million. The General Fund increased by approximately \$3.7 million or 2.2% over the FY 2015 adopted budget. The FY 2016 budget for the General Fund includes expenditure increases of approximately \$800,000 in fixed cost increases, \$1.4 million in mandated cost increases, and \$1.3 million in additional local support to the School Division, with a limited set of enhancements to ensure continuity of services. In addition, the Board approved a two-percent cost-of-living increase for permanent County staff which is projected to cost \$800,000.

Revenue

In comparison to FY 2015, General Fund revenue is projected to increase by approximately \$3.7 million, with the most significant increases occurring in the real estate, personal property, and sales taxes, coupled with a seven-tenth of a cent (\$0.007) increase in the overall real estate tax rate. Community Development fee revenue continues to show growth, with only limited slowdown in recent months similar to the rest of the region's housing market through the winter. While this slowdown has limited the level of annual growth, permitting and development revenues continue to experience year-over-year increases.

Tax Dollar Breakdown



Tax Rate Comparison

		Tax Year 2014 Adopted Rate	Tax Year 2015 Adopted Rate
Real Estate	General	\$0.941	\$0.948
	Fire & Rescue	\$0.045	\$0.045
	Conservation Easement Service District	\$0.006	\$0.006
	Total Real Estate Tax Rate	\$0.992	\$0.999
Personal Property	Personal	\$4.65	\$4.65
	Business	\$2.30	\$2.30
Stormwater Management Fee ¹		\$13.64	\$13.64

¹The Stormwater Management Fee is a County-wide special assessment, on a per parcel basis. The FY 2016 adopted budget includes an amendment to create exemptions from the fee for those parcels with an assessed value of \$2,500 or less or those parcels that have qualified for real estate tax relief for the elderly or permanently and totally disabled requirements.

	Tax Year 2014	Tax Year 2015	Difference
Value ¹	\$321,300	\$321,300	\$0
Tax Bill	\$3,174	\$3,196	\$22

¹Tax Year 2015 is not a reassessment year.

County Government Employees¹

Functional Area	Full Time Equivalents
General Government	117.53
Judicial Administration	45.10
Public Safety	247.90
Public Works	64.50
Health and Welfare	48.53
Culture	63.19
Community Development	44.63
Other Funds	45.50
Total County	676.88

¹Additional detail, including total School Division FTEs, is outlined in the Introduction of the adopted budget book, as well as the "Budget Summary" table of each departmental section.

Capital Improvement Program

The adopted Capital Improvement Program totals \$95.6 million over the five-year planning period, FY 2016 – FY 2020. Of this amount, \$19.5 million will be allocated for public safety and fire and rescue projects, \$6.0 million for the development of joint-use facilities by the general government, school division, and other organizations, \$1.0 million for County/School office space solutions, \$11.35 million for library facilities, \$17.1 million for parks and recreational projects, \$9.5 million for environmental services projects, \$9.0 million for utility projects, \$2.15 million of Airport projects, and \$20.0 million for school division projects.

Five-Year Operating Plan

In the upcoming year, the County will continue to broaden our long-term financial planning with the development of a five-year operating plan. The five-year plan is currently in development and will be presented to the Board of Supervisors later this calendar year.

For More Information

The FY 2016 Adopted Budget is available in the following locations:

- Fauquier County Office of Management & Budget website:
<http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/departments/budget/>
- All Fauquier County Libraries
- County Administrator's Office

Board of Supervisors

Chester W. Stribling
Chairman, Lee District
Christopher N. Granger
Vice-Chairman, Center District
Peter B. Schwartz
Marshall District
D. Lee Sherbeyn
Cedar Run District
R. Holder Trumbo, Jr.
Scott District

County Administration

Paul S. McCulla
County Administrator
Catherine M. Heritage
Deputy County Administrator
Kevin J. Burke
County Attorney

Office of Management & Budget

Erin M. Kozanecki
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Mallory K. Stribling
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Budget Technician II



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